

Taiwan and unilaterally suspended the functions of the two organizations for more than three years. It is a situation we deeply regret.

Under the influence of democracy and freedom, Taiwan is becoming increasingly liberalized and advanced. Such an environment has exerted a direct impact on the SEF to be more flexible and open, when holding consultations with ARATS. Let me assure you that the ROC government is fully confident and sincere in resolving any political differences between the two sides via consultations. Even so, we will not hold talks with the Chinese mainland under such unfriendly conditions as political inequality, diplomatic interference, and military threat. National security and dignity are what I myself and the SEF personnel constantly must bear in mind, when we exchange contacts with the Chinese mainland. I believe that these two criterias are also the two foremost concerns of the people of Taiwan.

In recent years, I have observed that Beijing has been withdrawing from the position that "we can talk about anything" toward a parochial mentality that "we can only talk about political issues." This confuses us.

I would like to take this opportunity to call on Beijing to return to the consultation table as soon as possible, to establish mutual trust between the two sides through consultations, and to adopt necessary and positive measures to insure the peace and stability of the Taiwan Strait.

Fourth, the two sides should expand items and the scope of exchanges and cooperations and treat each other with sincerity through reciprocity, in order to ultimately normalize bilateral relations. During the past 50 years, the two sides have accumulated individual experiences of development that can be exchanged to assist each other. In the past, we have proposed that the two sides conduct exchanges and cooperate in the areas of agriculture, scientific technology, economic development, and rule by law. We have also suggested the two sides deal with the Asian financial crisis together, in order to jointly contribute to the prosperity and stability of the Asia-Pacific region.

Unfortunately, we have not had any positive response from Beijing, to date. In the future, we will continue to encourage and persuade the Chinese mainland to pragmatically respond to our constructive proposals. We will also unfold various cooperation plans with Beijing to increase mutual trust, achieve consensus, and ultimately attain the goal of establishing normalized relations between the two sides.

Ladies and gentlemen, during the past four decades, the ROC has managed to create miracles in economic development and political democratization, under unfavorable natural environments and conditions. Naturally, we wish to achieve more, and it is our hope that we can bridge the gap of the Taiwan Strait in economic and political developments by appropriate interaction and constructive dialogue between the both sides of the Taiwan Strait. This will help us to realize the natural reunification of both sides in a peaceful and democratic way.

At the threshold of the twenty-first century, with the Cold War era ended, I sincerely hope that the Chinese mainland will discard the remnants of the Cold War "zero-sum" thinking and expand their horizons to join us in building a peaceful and stable relationship for both sides of the Taiwan Strait, under conditions which respect the political status quo of both sides.

As time is pressing, let me finish my speech here. Thank you very much. And I wish all the distinguished participants of this conference health and confirmed success.

TRIBUTE TO SISTER ESTELLA IBARRA OF TOLEDO, OHIO

HON. MARCY KAPTUR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sister Estella Ibarra of Toledo, Ohio, who is being honored this evening in a special tribute for her work in our community. Since her 1988 arrival in Toledo, Sr. Estella has tended to the housing, employment, and educational needs of South Toledo residents, while ministering to their spiritual needs as well.

After coming to Toledo to establish Marianist Social Ministries, Sr. Estella witnessed the critical housing situation facing many of her clients and it spurred her on to action. While working as Hispanic Outreach Coordinator for Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Toledo, she proposed and initiated CHIP: the Charities' Homeowners Initiatives Program. Since 1992, CHIP has provided close to thirty low-moderate income families with financial counseling, legal assistance, training in budgeting, home management, and retirement planning in preparation for buying a home. Starting in the city of Toledo, Sr. Estella is replicating the program in seventeen other communities in the Toledo Catholic Diocese.

To aid families in housing crises, Sr. Estella founded La Posada, a temporary shelter for homeless families. The shelter, named to honor the Mexican Christmas tradition in which families walked through the village by candlelight reenacting the Holy Family's search for shelter on the night of Jesus' birth, allows families in need to stay up to ninety days while re-establishing a foothold. Sr. Estella founded La Posada in 1991 through the combined efforts of herself and five churches in Toledo's Old South End: SS Peter & Paul, Immaculate Conception, St. John's Lutheran, First English Lutheran, and Peace Lutheran. Serving largely Hispanic families in need, La Posada provides help to about 120 people each year, most of whom are migrant workers, recent immigrants, and refugees, as they strive toward self-sufficiency.

St. Estella also works closely with Toledo Central City Neighborhoods Development Corp (TCCN), which is sponsored by ten Catholic churches and rehabilitates and builds affordable homes in Toledo's central city neighborhood. She began service on TCCN's Board in 1994, and even served briefly as the organization's interim director in 1996.

Sometimes referred to as the "Mother Teresa of Toledo," Sister Estella has helped hundreds of Toledo's "poorest of the poor." In a time when many in our government and across our nation have abdicated our responsibilities toward one other, Sr. Estella has chosen instead to follow Christ's teaching: "Whatever you do to the least of my brethren, that you do unto me." She is a quiet and humble example of how we might live as true followers of Christ, and how we might seek to truly impact the life direction of people. Sr. Estella Ibarra is ensuring that our future will not only be different but better because she has been here. I join our community in honoring her achievements and thanking her in the most heartfelt way for the positive changes she has brought to people in need.

CELEBRATING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DR. RICHARD SKINNER

HON. MAC COLLINS

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. COLLINS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. Richard Skinner and his contributions to Clayton College and State University, to the Clayton County community, and to the State of Georgia. For over 5 years, Dr. Skinner skillfully guided Clayton College to the forefront of higher education in the information age.

Dr. Skinner developed and implemented a ground-breaking program providing every student and professor at Clayton College with a personal notebook computer. This launched the school into a new era, setting a higher standard for education not only in Georgia, but in the Nation as a whole. Dr. Skinner also led the steering committee responsible for implementing the Georgia Learning Library Online, the most advanced statewide World Wide Web-based library in the country.

Acknowledged by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution as "a national ambassador for technological training," Dr. Skinner's work has included the development of a fast track for students seeking jobs in the information technology field. The program responded to shortages in high-tech workers by teaming higher education and the information technology industry. Students graduate from the program with an excellent education and the potential to obtain highly paid, high-skill jobs with nearly unlimited opportunities for future advancement.

Dr. Skinner continues to be a strong advocate for improving our higher education system and preparing our work force for the next century. His actions have moved Clayton College strides forward. The Clayton, GA community may be losing a valuable leader, but it will be to the benefit of the entire State of Georgia. Dr. Skinner will serve as president and chief executive officer of Georgia GLOBE (Global Learning On-Line for Business and Education).

Georgia GLOBE will use technologies such as the Internet and the Web to provide Georgians, especially nontraditional adult students, with greater access to continued education. I look forward to continuing to work with Dr. Skinner as he creates new goals to bring Georgians and Americans into the information age. It has been, and will continue to be, an honor working with a man of such vision and dedication.

CONCERNING THE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

HON. BOB SCHAFFER

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, June 16, 1999

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, though derived of good intentions, the Federal Endangered Species Act has proven ineffective in achieving its desired objectives. Moreover, the law threatens the freedom and liberty of all Americans, but particularly rural Americans. As a Representative of the rural Fourth District